

**The Psychoanalytic Observation of Children**  
**Origins and Recent Developments -- Training and Research**  
**Its Significance for Psychotherapy and other Fields of Psychosocial Work**  
**An International Conference at the University of Vienna, April 19-21, 2024**

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**Exploring the emotional impact of a young child's transition from home to nursery:  
Linking the results of Young Child Observation with the analysis of cortisol data**

**Sunday, April 21, 11:00 a.m. / Hörsaal 30 / Parallel session C3**

**Abstract:**

Psychoanalytic studies emphasise that the separation from the primary caregivers leads to feelings of loss, grief and powerlessness. It is not surprising that the transition to day care increases physiological stress in children. The presentation focuses on a single case study of the FWF-funded research project 'Toddlers Adjustment to Out-of-Home-Care', run by Wilfried Datler (Department of Education/ Research Unit 'Psychoanalysis and Education') and Lieselotte Ahnert (Department of Developmental Psychology) at the University of Vienna. To provide a closer look at the transition process of the two-year-and-four-month-old Emilian, two methodological perspectives are employed: Young Child Observation according to the Tavistock Observational Method (TOM) and the analysis of Emilian's cortisol profile. We will show (i) that the Young Child Observation results explain the Cortisol profile changes and (ii) that the cortisol data support the Young Child Observation results.

**Keywords**

Transition to Day Care, Toddlers' Adjustment to Out-of-Home-Care, stress regulation, Cortisol data analysis, Young Child Observation, regulation of emotions

**Biographical details**

Dr. Tina Eckstein-Madry researches in the field of early childhood education and care (ECEC) at the German Youth Institute (Munich/Germany), focusing on attachment and interaction quality in out-of-home care settings and its relation to child cortisol regulation. She attended Young Child Observation seminars in the context of the Viennese study *Toddlers' Adjustment to Out-of-Home Care*, run by Wilfried Datler.

Mag. Ulrike Schäufele, a fellow at the Doctoral School in Education of the University of Vienna's, specializes in early childhood education, the transition of twins into day care and the use of the Tavistock Observation Method as a research tool. She attended Young Child Observation seminars in the context of the Viennese study "Toddlers' Adjustment to Out-of-Home Care" and the "Vienna Parent-Toddler Group Study".

Wilfried Datler, Univ.-Prof. Dr., is head of the research unit "Psychoanalysis and Education" at the Department of Education of the University of Vienna.

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